

Message Text

SECRET

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53

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

MC-02 ACDA-19 NIC-01 RSR-01 /142 W

----- 108814

R 011240Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7660

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION USUN

DIA WASHDC

USDOCOSOUTH

USEUCOM

USMISSION NATO

S E C R E T NICOSIA 1668

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, MARR, MOPS, CY, TU

SUBJECT: ALLEGED TURKISH HELICOPTER FLIGHTS

REF: NICOSIA 1626, STATE 149089, AND USDAO ANKARA 301355Z,
JULY 73 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: CONCUR WITH DEPT THAT USG SHOULD NOT GET OUT IN
FRONT ON HELICOPTER ISSUE. RECOMMEND NO FURTHER USG ACTION
UNLESS UNFICYP TAKES LEAD. END SUMMARY

1. UNFICYP DOES NOT PLAN GET OUT IN FRONT ON HELICOPTER
ISSUE AT THIS TIME. GOC'S BELATED COMPLAINT MADE IT IM-
POSSIBLE FOR UNFICYP TO VERIFY THAT FLIGHTS HAVE ACTUALLY
TAKEN PLACE. SO FAR AS WE ARE AWARE, NO INDEPENDENT OBSERVER
HAS SEEN OR HEARD UNIDENTIFIED HELICOPTERS. (UK RADAR NOT
PROGRAMMED PICK UP LOW, SLOW FLYING OBJECTS.)

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2. GOC APPARENTLY WANTED USE UNFICYP AS CHANNEL OF

COMMUNICATION TO GOT--DELAYING PRESENTATION PROTEST NOTE TO TURKISH EMBASSY UNTIL TWO DAYS AFTER "DELIVERY" ANNOUNCED--BUT UNFICYP UNWILLING FILL THIS ROLE. UNFICYP ALSO ANNOYED AT HIGH-HANDED ANNOUNCEMENT GOC WOULD SHOOT DOWN UNIDENTIFIED HELICOPTERS. UK HICOM HAS PROTESTED STRONGLY ON THIS POINT.

3. MIN INT (ANASTASSIOU) INSISTS SHOOTDOWN ORDER INTENDED TO FRIGHTEN TURKS OFF, THAT PRECAUTIONS WILL BE TAKEN TO PROTECT INNOCENT AIRCRAFT. BRITISH INFORMED BY NAT GUARD COMMANDER THAT NO RPT NO ORDERS HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO SHOOT DOWN UNIDENTIFIED AIRCRAFT. NAT GUARD EITHER HAS NOT RECEIVED GOVT ORDER (WIDELY REPORTED LOCAL PRESS) OR, MORE LIKELY, HAS NO INTENTION OBEYING INSTRUCTION IN ABSENCE SPECIFIC ORDERS FROM ATHENS. INTERESTINGLY, NAT GUARD CHIEF OF STAFF AND G2 (BOTH MAINLAND GREEK OFFICERS) REFUSED PROVIDE DATT WITH ANY INFO ON TIMING/FREQUENCY ALLEGED HELICOPTER FLIGHTS, REFERRING HIM TO GOC MININT. (MIN INT HAS REFERRED US TO FOREIGN MIN.)

4. DESPITE ABSENCE HARD INFORMATION, MOST LOCAL OBSERVERS FEEL THAT SOME HELICOPTER FLIGHTS HAVE TAKEN PLACE, THOUGH NOT NECESSARILY IN CONFORMITY GOC TIMETABLE. HOWEVER, WE DOUBT WHETHER HELICOPTERS FIGURE PROMINENTLY IN TURKISH ARMS SMUGGLING PROGRAM. LOW-LEVEL NIGHT FLIGHTS STRIKE US AS UNNECESSARILY DANGEROUS AND EXPENSIVE WAY OF GETTING WEAPONS INTO TMT HANDS (THOUGH NOT BEYOND TAF CAPABILITIES). IF HELICOPTER SHOT DOWN, CRASHED, OR WANDERED ASTRAY, WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOT TO DISOWN RESPONSIBILITY. WE ASSUME HELICOPTERS EMPLOYED ONLY AS LAST RESORT, FOR ESPECIALLY HIGH PRIORITY ITEMS, AND PERHAPS IN CONJUNCTION WITH SMUGGLING OF KEY PERSONNEL ONTO ISLAND. WE SUSPECT BULK TMT ARMS ARRIVE BY SEA.

5. WE DO NOT RECOMMEND USG MAKE ANY REPRESENTATIONS TO GOT OVER ALLEGED FLIGHTS NOW. WE DOUBT UNFICYP PLANS TO REHASH COLD GOC CHARGES, AND WE ASSUME TURKS WILL BE CAREFUL. IF INCIDENTS REPEATED AND UNFICYP ASSUMES MORE ACTIVE ROLE, REQUESTING OUR ASSISTANCE WITH TURKS, WE COULD REEVALUATE POSITION AT THAT TIME.

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